

APPROVED: Meeting No. 25-82

ATTEST: *Helen M. Heneghan*

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
MEETING NO. 18-82

May 13, 1982

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in budget work session at 8:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, Maryland at Vinson Street, Rockville, Maryland, on Thursday, May 13, 1982.

PRESENT

Mayor John R. Freeland

Councilman Steve Abrams

Councilman Douglas Duncan

Councilwoman Viola Hovsepian

Councilman John Tyner, II
(left at 8:30 p.m.)

The Mayor in the Chair.

In attendance: City Clerk Helen Heneghan; Budget Officer Anna Lee Berman; Budget Analyst James Keene; City Manager Larry Blick.

The Mayor and Council reviewed the budget as Ms. Berman, Budget Officer, presented them with long-range planning information and trends that are expected in the City's employment, housing and population.

LEGISLATION AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Councilwoman Hovsepian asked why the slogan "An Informed Citizen is a Good Citizen" was replaced in the masthead of the paper. It had been there for years. She suggested the Council look into the mailing of free agendas so that people can be better informed. She said people can pay for the minutes if they wish. She also asked that information on subscription to the minutes be made more available. The City Manager will return with figures on this for the Council. The Council also discussed information by way of a recording telling about the agenda. All of this will come back to the Council for a decision.

RECREATION AND LEISURE TIME

Municipal Golf Course

Councilwoman Hovsepian noted that Montgomery County does include the debt service in its funding. Mayor Freeland noted that the revenue authority courses do so.

Civic Center Park

Councilwoman Hovsepian asked what has happened to the Tots Playground at the Civic Center. Ms. Berman explained new equipment is being put in place this year.

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM AREA

Snow and Ice Control

Councilwoman Hovsepian asked if there is any way to ensure sidewalks to be cleared of snow. It is so difficult for senior citizens to get around in bad weather. She suggested using youth employment where a list of names would be available to those who called in. The Mayor and Council discussed the best way to handle this situation and asked that the staff return with some recommendations.

RECREATION AND LESIURE TIME

Community Recreation Programs

Councilwoman Hovsepian asked why there is no kindergarten in schools such as Twinbrook. She also asked for some information from the staff on what would occur when schools that have kindergarten programs such as Lone Oak close down.

HUMAN RESOURCES PROGRAM

Senior Citizens Activities

Councilwoman Hovsepian asked if this is not a duplication of effort with Montgomery County and are any refunds given. Ms. Berman explained that there is little duplication. The foods are federally funded and most programs that the County provide come under the Recreation Tax which is not charged to Rockville City residents.

OTHER FUNDS

Redgate Sinking Fund

Councilwoman Hovsepian asked for an explanation of the Redgate Sinking Fund. The City Manager explained the Redgate process of proceeds from the sale of industrial land used to reduce the debt at the golf course.

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Pedestrian Ways

Councilwoman Hovsepian asked by what determination the City decides which sidewalks will be redone. There are some in the Twinbrook Shopping Center area in quite bad condition and also quite a bit of bush intrusion in the right of way. Mayor Freeland asked that the staff get the Municipal Infractions process going this summer and also that the shopping areas be cleaned up.

Councilman Duncan suggested that the emergency assistance program be increased to \$100,000 and kept there even if it is 1 cent on the tax rate. He also asked that there be no increase in fees for children's recreation programs but the adults should be pay as you go. This will save \$11,000 which is listed as the current deficit. The City Manager suggested that

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there be more conversations with businesses about sponsoring youth teams. This is done extensively in baseball and football but the other teams are lacking in sponsors. Mayor Freeland suggested that a meeting be held with the businesses of the City and talk to them about their participation. He is anxious to begin a working relationship with these people. They can be invaluable in subsidizing the emergency preparedness fund and he would like to get started on this soon. Councilman Abrams cautioned Mayor Freeland that more information should be forthcoming on that program. He asked that Rev. Kaseman provide hard data to the Council before the budget deliberations are over. He prefers to make no decision or encourage private participation before more facts are known as to the effectiveness of the program. Who is using it and for what. However, he said if it is decided that the program is necessary and useful, he would like to see the \$100,000 as originally suggested made available. The Council continued to discuss this but no resolution was reached. The City Manager will bring information back to the Council as soon as possible.

RECREATION AND LEISURE TIME

Special Events

Councilman Abrams asked what happened to the Winter Lights Program. He said he would like to see it continued. The City Manager said there is a difficulty with the program. The City Attorney's office has cautioned about the separation of church and state and the City falling into criticism if religious symbols are used. Councilwoman Hovsepian suggested that the churches and synagogues should do what they wish in the holiday seasons but the City should stay out of it. Mayor Freeland asked that the staff come up with enough funds to put up decent holiday decorations that are tasteful. Councilman Abrams said he has seen to it that a menorah can be provided to the City at no cost and it can be installed at no expense to the City. The Council discussed the Winter Lights Program and the holiday observances at length. The Mayor asked that the City Manager bring back previous costs on decorations and the Council will get back to it.

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Traffic Operations

Councilman Abrams asked the cost of installing a traffic light at North Washington Street and Dawson Avenue. The City Manager said it is in the C.I.P. and the cost is \$44,000 and it is programmed for FY 88. It was the Council's feeling that it should be moved forward and that will be taken care of when they get into the C.I.P. Councilman Abrams asked that the staff look into the placing of a stop sign at Dawson and Beall Avenue.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council in budget work session, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m. to convene again in general session on Monday, May 17, 1982, at 8:00 p.m. or at the call of the Mayor.